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SUBJECT 13th Frontier Guard Brigade

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## 13th Frontier Guard Brigade

Headquarters was located in a castle [See Enclosure (A)] in Pobezovice, with the final command in Prague. Personnel at headquarters consisted of 80 men including 40 officers. The 13th Brigade received all its orders from the Prague Command [redacted] which was commanded by Col Hlavacka; his deputy was Gen Smoldas. The 13th Brigade [redacted] was divided into five battalions which were in turn each divided into five companies.

The 13th Brigade was divided into the following five battalions given together with their locations:

- 1st Battalion, "Belsky" - located in Bela n. Radbuzou
- 2nd Battalion, "Pivonsky" - located in Pivon
- 3rd Battalion, "Trhanovsky" - located in Trhanov
- 4th Battalion, "Koutsky" - located in Koutna (Bohmerwald)
- 5th Battalion - located in Hostoun. This battalion was a reserve battalion and had no companies on the border.

Also under the command of the 13th Brigade were the following:

- Non-commissioned Officers School located in Ujezd u Sv Krize
- Military training camps located in Ceska Kubice and in "Vyhledy". (see enclosures 1, point 13)

The Battalions were broken down into companies as follows:

- 1st Battalion - 1st through 5th Companies
- 2nd Battalion - 6th through 10th Companies
- 3rd Battalion - 11th through 15th Companies
- 4th Battalion - 16th through 20th Companies
- 5th Battalion - [redacted] this was a reserve unit

The 2nd Battalion, as previously stated, had its headquarters in Pivon and was divided into five companies, the 6th through the 10th, which were located as follows:

- 6th Company - Rybniky
- 7th Company - Dvur Diana
- 8th Company - Padorf
- 9th Company - Horni Grafenried
- 10th Company - Nemanice

Personnel at headquarters of the 2nd Company consisted of 60 men of whom 25 were officers. The boundaries between the area assigned to the 8th Company and that assigned to the 9th Company were marked by the border stone number 13 and those between the 9th Company and the 10th Company by the border stone number 21.

Each company consisted of 55 men divided into four troops, three of which were assigned to watching the border, the fourth being a troop of soldiers with dogs.

### 3. The equipment of the 13th Frontier Guard Brigade was the following:

Rifles - Both German and Czechoslovak make. The German rifles were of an older model than the Czechoslovak, which were quite new, but they were much better with respect to precision in shooting.

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Submachine guns - Model CZ (Ceskoslovenska Zbrojovka, Brno), year of production 1950, caliber 92, for 40 cartridges (usually loaded only with 32 cartridges). These were not too good with respect to precision in shooting.

Light machine guns - Model CZ (Ceskoslovenska Zbrojovka, Czechoslovak Armanent Factory, Brno), pre-World War II production, caliber 7.92 mm, for 21 cartridges. Each Company had three light machine guns with the exception of the 9th which had in addition one heavy machine gun.

Heavy machine guns - Model 34 CZ, barrel air-cooled, caliber 7.92, cartridges in a steel belt with each belt containing 200.

Motor vehicles - Each Company was equipped with a passenger car "Skoda-Tudor" and one motorcycle "Jawa 250". The Battalion Command was equipped with four trucks Model "Rn-Praga", 2.5 tons; four automobiles "Skoda-Tudor"; and three motorcycles model "Jawa 250". (The identification of these cars started with the letter "B"). The Brigade Command was equipped with a number of automobiles model "Skoda-Tudor" and trucks model "Rn-Praga", and had in addition one truck "Tatra 111".

Radio transmitters - The Brigade Command and each battalion was equipped with a radio transmitter and receiver. The cars were not equipped with radio transmitters.

Horses - Each company had four to five riding horses.

Dogs - The 6th through the 10th Companies had the following:

- 6th - six dogs; one called "Alux" was trained.
- 7th - three dogs, one of which, the bitch called "Gilka" was trained. The name of another was "Donar" but I do not recall the name of the third.
- 8th - four dogs, two of which, "Cedr" and "Caesar", were trained. The other two, "Donar" and "Jugos" were not trained.
- 9th - four dogs, one of which "Akord", was trained.

10th - four dogs.

4. Each unit had its own ammunition depot which was located in the same building in which the soldiers of the unit were accommodated. Each unit was required to have a supply of ammunition sufficient for 24 hours of warfare, taking into consideration all arms needed in case of an outbreak of war. Hand grenades as well as cartridges were stored in the unit's ammunition depot.
5. The battalion had a supply of ammunition sufficient for all its companies for 24 hours of warfare, and the brigade also had a 24 hours supply for all its battalions. As a result, in case of an unexpected outbreak of war, a company had ammunition sufficient for three times 24 hours, or 72 hours.
6. The ammunition depot of the 2nd Battalion in Pivon was located in a former Roman Catholic Church, which was confiscated and turned into a gymnasium for soldiers of the Frontier Guard.
7. The main health department was established at the Brigade Command in Pobezovice. Also, each battalion had its own surgeon, and each company had sanitary equipment for first aid.
8. All men stationed with the Brigade Command and the Battalion Command belonged to the draft years 1928, 1929 and 1930 (i.e., men born in 1928, 1929, 1930). All men belonging in the draft year 1928 were called into the military service in October 1950. Those in the draft year 1929-30 were called into the service, some in October 1950 and the remainder in October 1951, and are to be released on 1 Nov 53. Those in the draft year 1928-29 are to be released 1 Nov 52.

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9. A member of the Frontier Guards was allowed to use his weapon in the border zone without warning and upon his own judgment. He could shoot to kill, however, only when the prospective escapee was in the immediate vicinity of the border. He must first endeavor to take the person alive by arrest or by injuring him only. If a soldier of the Frontier Guards unit succeeded in taking the would-be escapee either by arresting him, injuring him or even by killing him, all members of the soldier's unit are given a promotion and a salary bonus.
10. Morale in the Frontier Guards units was extremely poor. Everyone tried to make his service as easy as possible. Very often it was discovered that soldiers slept while on duty. Only very few soldiers performed their duties carefully. Officers were members of the Communist Party. Some were, however, men of good character, and their relations with the soldiers were good. The percentage of Communist Party members among the soldiers was very small. Every soldier performed his duties only for fear that he would otherwise be described as an "enemy of Czechoslovak People's Democracy" and as such arrested. Every soldier had to pledge loyalty to the government. Despite that there were only very few true Communists among the soldiers. Among the officers only very few could be described as absolutely reliable.
11. Discipline in the Frontier Guards units was maintained well only during the training in the barracks. Leave was obtained only by soldiers who distinguished themselves in some way during the performance of their duties. For instance, the Brigade Command would receive a report from STB (police) that somebody was expected to attempt an escape across the border at a designated place. This report was accompanied by a description of the would-be escapee, the kind of documents held by him, a notation whether or not he was armed etc. After the receipt of such a report, the Commander of the Brigade would immediately visit the Frontier Guards unit located in the area where the escape was to be made, and deliver an address to the soldiers of that unit. In his address the Commander would point out first the importance of the Frontier Guards units, and then he would promise a reward if the person should be apprehended and punishment if he should make his escape. As a reward the soldiers were promised promotions and a 10-day leave to any place they wished to go with military transportation provided. This reward would be higher or lower according to the value of the documents found on the person caught. Also, the reward was higher in the event the person were taken alive. The Commander would then continue with an evaluation of the damage which would be done to the State should an escape be made by a person such as described in the initial report.
12. A money reward of 10 thousand Kcs or more was also given. This amount was fixed according to the importance of the person attempting to escape, the reason for escaping, the value of the documents he was trying to take out of the country (ie, could the loss of such documents harm the Communist rule of the country or inflict damage on the "toiling masses"). Should a known escape plan be successful, the soldiers were, on the other hand, punished. The punishment consisted of a fine and a prison sentence. Subject to punishment were all soldiers of the guard unit stationed in the border zone where the escape was made. This punishment was made on the basis of a report by agents of the STB (secret police) at the refugee camp where the escapee finally located himself. This report contained information as to when and where the escapee crossed the border, to whom he gave any information about Czechoslovakia and what kind of information was given and with what success the escapee was working abroad against the Czechoslovakian Government. The lowest term of imprisonment was 10 days, but only soldiers with an extremely good alibi received the minimum, the term generally being much higher. In addition to the prison sentence the soldiers were barred from further promotion.
13. Each Frontier Guards soldier received a pay of 300 Kcs per month plus a 500 Kcs "frontier bonus". If a soldier was punished for even the smallest offense, he was not eligible for the "frontier bonus"; for this reason soldiers were subject to frequent punishment because the Command was reluctant to grant the "bonus". Officers were paid according to their rank and the kind of service performed. For example, a lieutenant in command of a company received 5,000 Kcs per month and 500 Kcs "frontier bonus". His deputy in the rank of an elder received 4,000 Kcs per month and a 500 Kcs "frontier bonus". If the deputy to the commander was a lieutenant in the compulsory military service, he received only 2,000 Kcs per month and a 500 Kcs "frontier bonus". A troop commander in the rank of private received 400 Kcs and a 500 Kcs "frontier bonus".

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14. Food for the Frontier Guards was fixed according to the norm (standard) "L" and was good in quality. The norm "L" was granted only to the Air Force and to the Frontier Guards units. In order to save meat for the people the Commander often ordered the shooting of game in the border zone for use in the military kitchen.
15. Political education was compulsory for the Frontier Guards units and was taught four hours a week. When a soldier of the Frontier Guards fled the country, political education was then taught daily. The subjects of the lectures varied but generally dealt with the following: the Soviet Union, the Czechoslovak People's Army, the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the development of socialism in the Soviet Union, the imperialist army of the US, traitors of Czechoslovakia in exile, etc.
16. Soldiers of the Czechoslovak Army are not satisfied with the present state of affairs chiefly because they have too much work, little free time, severe punishments for the slightest offenses, and continuous political education.
17. The Union of Czechoslovak Youth (SCM) follows a policy similar to that of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Its task is to appeal to young people, to organize them in the simplest possible way such as by forming voluntary brigades, encouraging higher efforts and better discipline of work in industrial plants, etc. Recently [ ] SCM promoted a campaign in the Frontier Guards units in order to encourage soldiers to voluntarily extend their service in the Frontier Guards (beyond the compulsory period of service), to enter SNB (police) and STB (secret police) units. Despite great efforts of the SCM agents only a few members of the Frontier Guards units signed up. 50X1
18. Persons can move freely in the border zone only if they are equipped with identification cards verified by the District National Committee (ONV) and if they have their residence in the border zone. If a person living outside the border zone wants to visit someone residing in the zone, he must have a special permit. This permit is issued by the Command of the 13th Frontier Guard Brigade on the advice of the security officer of the District National Committee in the district of the applicant's residence and of the security officer of the District National Committee (ONV) of the Frontier Guard Zone for which application is made. The permit contains its own number, the number of the identification card, the date of issuance, the time of its validity and the border zone for which it is valid. A person equipped with such a permit is permitted to move freely in the border zone but only on the highways and during the day.
19. Border duty was set up according to a special timetable. One-third of the soldiers were on duty during the day and the other two-thirds during the night. The duty timetable was posted each day at 1800 hours and was valid until 1800 hours the following day. With this system in force, no soldier knew in advance where he would be on duty. If a soldier escaped the country, the location of all Frontier Guards sentries as well as the passwords within the whole brigade were changed within one hour. The frontier guards patrolled the border zone and the "forbidden zone". In the course of this duty they performed the control of documents on the highways and the railroads. They also patrolled the whole border in their respective sections in the observation towers, which were not, however, occupied at all times.
20. In the case of an emergency, so-called demonstration details and hidden details were used. Demonstration guards stood duty so that they were visible from a long distance. Thus, the would-be escapee, seeing the demonstration detail, would await its departure and then be trapped by the hidden detail. Many people were caught by this method.
21. In spite of precautions taken, many escapes were made. Consequently, the Command of the Frontier Guards units 9600 in Prague arranged a contest for suggestions as to the best and cheapest mechanical security equipment which would alert the guard units to an attempted escape. Awards were made for the two best suggestions. One of these alarm equipments suggested is already in operation (see Enclosure (B)). The second was being prepared. Such equipment was installed at one place in the border zone of the 8th and 9th Companies. Four of these alarm equipments have been installed at this place. Following is a description of this equipment: The equipment is installed in a clearance along the border. Obstacles made of barbed wire are built and observation towers established to enable the guards to watch that particular section. The main observation tower is equipped with a

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map of the Company's whole area. On this map are electric bulbs which light up if a border crosser touches the alarm equipment - green if the border crosser is leaving the country and red if he is entering the country. Two wires are stretched between the barbed-wire obstacles which, if touched, will show on the map in the observation tower the exact spot where the crossing was made. When the alarm has been set off by this equipment, emergency guard units are promptly dispatched to the area. The wires are covered with a material which repels game.

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23. STB (secret police) was divided into several groups:

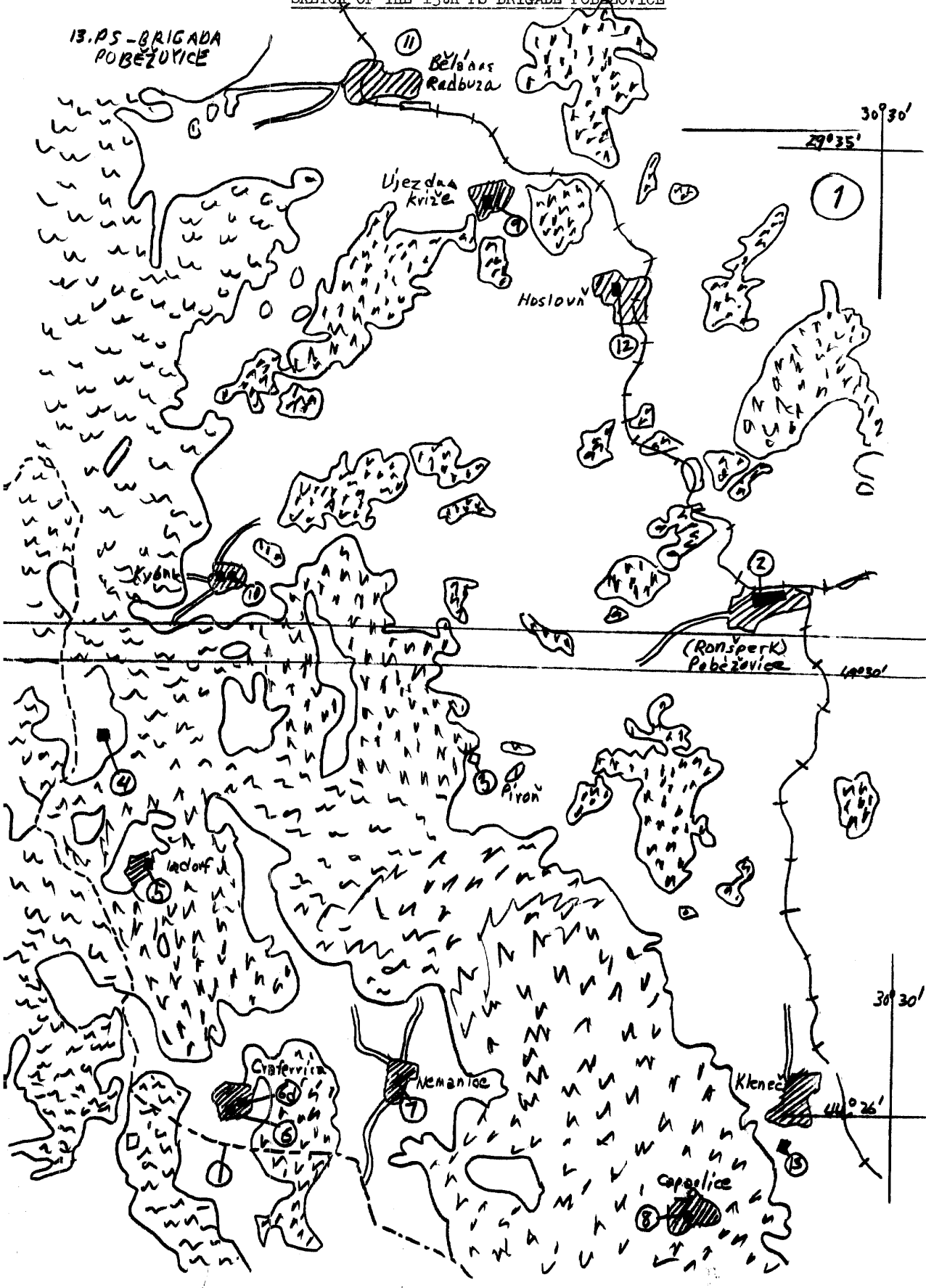
- (a) Civilian STB - (internal security of the State which is further divided into industrial and prison groups (STB agents in prisons).
- (b) Uniformed STB - the members wear uniforms similar to those of the SNB (regular police) but with red trim. (SNB uniforms with blue trim are worn by traffic and order policemen)
- (c) Military STB - members of DOZ (intelligence).

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ENCLOSURE (A): The 13th PS Brigade Pobezovice with legend  
(B): The Signal Alarm Equipment with Legend

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SKETCH OF THE 13th PS BRIGADE POBEZOVICE





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ENCLOSURE (A)

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Legend



1. State border line.
2. Command of the 13th Frontier Guard Brigade in Pomezovice, a former castle.
3. Command of the 2nd Battalion in Pivon. Soldiers and officers are accommodated in the village.
4. Command of the 7th Company, "Dvur (farm) Diana". Soldiers and officers are accommodated in a former farm.
5. Command of the 8th Company, "Padorf". Soldiers are accommodated in a former school.
6. Command of the 9th Company, "Grafenried". Soldiers are accommodated in a former brewery.
- 6a. The building of the Command of the 9th company is in a former family house.
7. Command of the 10th Company, "Nemanice". Soldiers are accommodated in a former hotel.
8. Command of the 11th Company, "Capartice".
9. Command of the Non-commission Officers' School for Frontier Guard Units (PS) in Ujezd Sv. Krize. This School is in a former castle.
10. Command of the 6th Company, "Rybniky". Soldiers are accommodated in the village in the vicinity of the church.
11. Command of the 1st Battalion.
12. Command of the 5th Battalion of the Reserve Corps "Hostoun". The accommodation facilities for the soldiers are in the village.
13. Training ground for newly enrolled soldiers of the Frontier Guards units "Na Vyhledech". The accommodation facilities are in a former hotel.

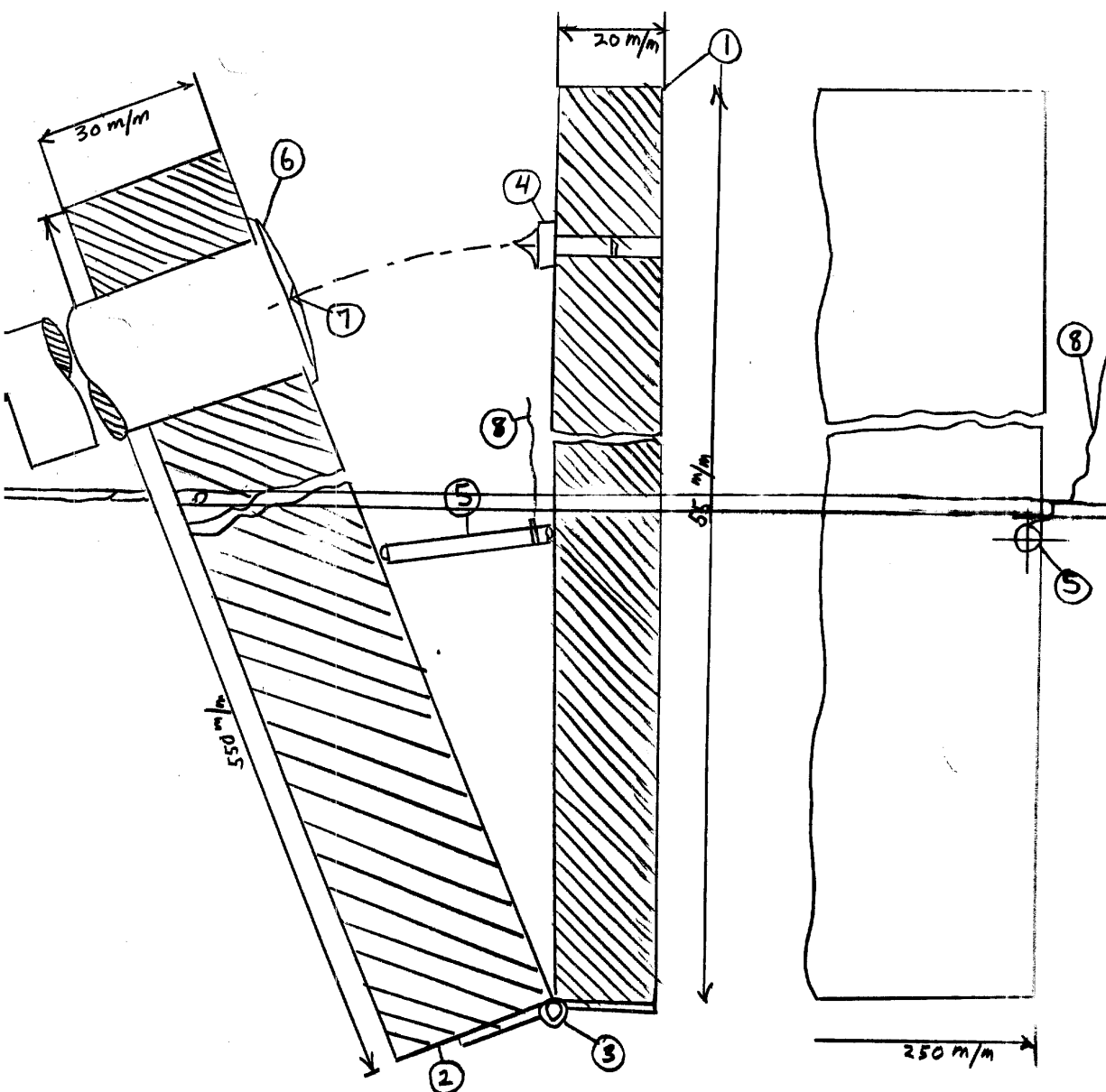
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ENCLOSURE (B)

## THE SIGNAL ALARM EQUIPMENT

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## Legend

1. Lower board made of hard wood, 550 x 250 mm and 20 mm thick.
2. Upper board, made of hard wood, 550 x 250 mm and 30 mm thick.
3. Hinge for opening and closing both boards in a certain angle.
4. Striker, a steel stick pointed on the end.
5. The safety stick, made of hard wood, about 5 mm thick and 100 mm long.
6. A rocket cartridge, which when shot off makes a shower of white sparks (Regular cartridge of a rocket pistol).
7. A fuse of the rocket.
8. A wire fixed at the safety stick which leads into the field.

In the upper board a rocket cartridge is located. The upper board is inclined at such an angle that the safety stick can be easily put at its place. Both ends of the safety stick are round so that the stick can easily be put out of its place. The length of the safety stick, the weight of the upper board and the angle of the opened boards are made in such a way that by removing the safety stick the rocket explodes. The safety stick is put out of its place if a person stumbles over the wire which is fixed to the stick and the other end of which is fixed to the surface. This equipment was tested with an excellent result.

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